

# *Town of Farmington*

1000 County Road 8  
Farmington, New York 14425

## **PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE**

**Monday, October 7, 2024 • 6:30 p.m.**

### **MINUTES—*DRAFT***

*The following minutes are written as a summary of the main points that were made and are the official and permanent record of the actions taken by the Town of Farmington Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update Committee. Remarks delivered during discussions are summarized and are not intended to be verbatim transcriptions. Video and audio recordings of the meetings are available from the Town.*

*The meeting was conducted at the Farmington Town Hall and via remote video conference.*

**R** = *Attended via remote video conference.*

**Board Members Present:** Susan Charland, *Committee Chairperson* **R**  
Julie LaRue  
Adrian Bellis  
Leah Thomas  
Larry Potter  
Sara Weidenborner

**Board Members Excused:** Julie Maslyn

**Staff Present:**  
Matthew Sousa, MRB Group, D.P.C.  
Ronald L. Brand, Town of Farmington Director of Development and Planning  
Tim Ford, Town of Farmington Highway and Parks Superintendent  
Dan Delpriore, Town of Farmington Code Enforcement Officer  
Steve Holtz, Town Board Member  
Peter Inglesbe, Town Supervisor

**Attending Public:**  
Amanda McDonald, Victor Community Baseball and Softball  
Darik Jordan, Victor Community Baseball and Softball  
Jody leigh, Victor Community Baseball and Softball  
Zach Fuller, Victor Community Baseball and Softball  
Bob Childs

## **1. OPEN MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairperson Susan Charland.

## **2. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2024, MEETING MINUTES**

Susan Charland asked members if they had any changes or alterations to the September Meeting Minutes as provided. No changes were requested, and the Committee approved the minutes.

## **3. STATUS UPDATE**

Regarding the Planning Foundations Report and Existing Conditions Analysis, Mr. Sousa stated that both sections have been updated. Final copies of these sections were sent to the committee electronically for review last week. If there are no corrections or edits from the committee these sections will be finalized and posted to the website. No objections were heard from the committee. Mr. Sousa stated that these documents would be finalized and published to the Plan Update webpage before the next meeting.

## **4. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

Mr. Sousa introduced members of the public that were attending the meeting. He stated that a few weeks ago a group of individuals representing the Victor Community Baseball and Softball league reached out to the Town Supervisor requesting a meeting to discuss the need for softball and baseball fields. The Supervisor recommended that they attend the upcoming Parks and Recreation Update Committee meeting as no decisions will be made by the Town until that process has concluded. As a result, they have shown up tonight to give a brief presentation and discuss the need for softball and baseball fields in the Town of Farmington. The floor was then turned over to Darik Jordan, Vice President of the Victor Community Baseball and Softball.

Mr. Jordan stated that Victor Community Baseball and Softball is a volunteer program. They don't get paid a lot of money and are entirely comprised of volunteers. They are a not-for-profit organization with 501c3 status. There are four main entities, community softball, community baseball and travel baseball and travel softball programs.

Victor Community Baseball and Softball represents about 800 athletes, but that number only includes the spring organizations and the travel teams. It doesn't take into account the summer program. They are experiencing about 10% growth in enrollment each year, which creates a need for more facilities to meet the current and anticipated enrollment for the next 15 to 20 years.

Victor Community Baseball and Softball currently uses the Victor Central School District Campus for ball fields. Two fields were eliminated in 2017, and two other fields are in disrepair. Softball does not have designated fields that are not shared with baseball. Varsity, Junior Varsity and modified School teams have priority for fields. Some younger divisions can only play one night a week and do not have access to a field for the entire year.

Mr. Jordan stated that the Town of Victor does not have any fields for use by the Victor Community

Baseball and Softball and that they look at Farmington's potential for fields. Currently, Farmington has 4 baseball fields and 3 softball fields. In 2016, the existing Parks and Recreation master Plan stated that the demand for baseball fields exceeded the capacity which is even more true today. Practices regularly get canceled because fields get double booked and the School programs take priority.

Mr. Jordan explained that the vacant land adjacent to the Town Hall would be a perfect location for a baseball and softball complex and could accommodate up to 7 fields which would be enough for current and project growth of the program. He described the sense of community felt when at a baseball complex with multiple programs playing simultaneously in one location.

Mr. Jordan also described the need to maintain the fields and thus store maintenance equipment, something that could also be accomplished in the area adjacent to the Town Hall. Having a complex eliminated the need to bring maintenance equipment around Town or to have multiple sets of equipment at each site.

Mr. Jordan concluded by stating that they have demonstrated the immediate need for fields right now, and in the future. Ultimately it is the goal of Victor Community Baseball and Softball to have the vision of 5 to 10 years from now of having enough fields for the players. They want to better maintain fields and store equipment where it is needed.

Ms. Leigh stated they recently reached out to participants and found that 54% of participants are from Victor and 44% are from Farmington. They propose to change the name of the organization to Victor Farmington Community Baseball and Softball, although they are unsure what that entails with their non-profit status.

Mr. Sousa stated that during our stakeholder engagement meetings the Town and Village of Victor corroborated a lot of what we have heard this evening.

Mr. Jordan stated that his undemanding is that most of their fields are for lacrosse and Soccer. He also stated that he believes there is land owned by the Town of Victor that may be slated for a future park or highway garage, but otherwise there is not a lot of opportunities for future field development.

Mr. Fuller introduced himself and stated that he represents Victor Baseball. The baseball leagues experience all the same issues as softball and that more fields, maintenance equipment and storage are all a priority. He stated that the increase in population of both Victor and Farmington adds to the need for additional fields.

Mr. Fuller also discussed the desire for a shared Victor-Farmington Community center.

Mr. Sousa stated that there have been discussions and that both communities seem interested, but that there are a lot of hoops to jump through before that becomes reality. To date they have only been very preliminary discussions and possible interest.

Ms. McDonald stated she has reached out to pinnacle sports to see if she can get their two outdoor fields in usable condition because they built them in right before Covid, and never use them. She estimates that it would cost approximately \$10,000 to get them up and running.

Supervisor Inglesby stated that the Town has invested a lot of money in upgrading the existing fields, addressing parking issues, installing security cameras and electric charging stations.

Ms. Leigh stated that VCBS could be a willing partner for fundraising opportunities to address field quality and upgrades. She said that an individual who maintains athletic fields in buffalo came out and estimated that installation of 7 fields by the Town Hall would cost approximately \$3.3 million. She estimated that upgrades to existing fields would cost about as much as upgrading pinnacles fields would cost.

Mr. Sousa introduced a concept map to the committee for a potential use for the Town owned land adjacent to the Town Hall. He cautioned that this was a preliminary design and that the land was not at all slated for the development of a park. This was simply a concept based on a study completed by Syracuse University students and was for illustrative purposes only.

The committee expressed interest in the map that was shown and the ideas. The passive recreational trail was noted as something the Town could use more of.

Mr. Sousa thanks the representatives from VCBS for attending the meeting. It is always valuable to get community input on not just needed facilities but maintenance needs. They are the boots on the ground and the ones who have the best information. This will be very instructive as the committee move forward through the planning process.

Mr. Sousa reminded everyone that there is a planned public engagement session planned for November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at the Town Hall. He encouraged everyone to attend, including more representatives from VCBS.

## **5. REVIEW DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX**

Mr. Sousa introduced the draft implementation matrix. He stated that this matrix was generated from feedback received from the community survey completed in February 2024, the stakeholder engagement meetings, past priorities from the 2017 plan and the hands-on workshop that the committee completed at the September steering committee meeting. The matrix is divided into three strategies, including programming, facilities, and long-range planning initiatives. He also stated that he is not married to the format or phrasing and that the committee should edit and refine as they wish.

He stated that the intent is to have the committee review and refine this document so that in November a more finalized version can be reviewed by the committee. Ultimately, the goal is to put this in front of the public at the November 18<sup>th</sup> public engagement session.

Tim Ford stated that some of the contents on the facilities page were accomplished and that these could be eliminated from the matrix.

Mr. Sousa stated that that is the type of feedback and refinement that is helpful.

Jule LaRue suggested that this be converted to an editable Google Doc that could be reviewed and refined in real time by the entire committee. She also asked if the numbering of the action items corresponded with priority.

Mr. Sousa stated that that was a great idea. The committee agreed that a Google Doc was a good idea. He also stated that the numbering did not correspond with priority and was just a way to organize the action items within each overarching strategy.

It was suggested by the committee that a column be added to denote priority of the action items and when it would be implemented within the next ten years.

It was agreed that Mr. Sousa would refine the matrix based on feedback from this meeting, convert the document into a Google Doc and send to the committee via email. He asked that each member take a look and provide feedback and edits within one week of when it is sent. He will then incorporate those edits, finalize and re-send for review at the November meeting.

## **6. OVERVIEW AND UPDATE ON THE NOVEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup> PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SESSION**

Mr. Sousa stated that the November 18<sup>th</sup> public engagement session will be a drop-in style session, held between 6-9PM or for about 3 hours that evening. The format will be the stations of each park and the recommendations and initiative from the committee. It will enable people to review and comment and fill in anything that this committee may have missed.

The committee discussed how best to advertise the event. Mr. Sousa stated that he, Mr. Brand and Susan Charland had discussed this briefly. We feel posting on the website, Town Facebook page and email blast to the Town. It was also discussed that each committee member could advertise on their personal social media or neighborhood Facebook groups.

Mr. Brand expressed some concern about how to incorporate Zoom into the public session. Mr. Sousa said that it would be a challenge to do this as there would be too much background noise and no one specifically assigned to moderate the session. It was decided that MRB could look into the feasibility of this and possibly come up with an alternative means of participation for those who cannot attend in person.

## **7. OPEN DISCUSSION - COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND TOWN STAFF**

Mr. Sousa asked if the committee had additional comments. Mr. Brand expressed the need to hold the meeting in a different space due to the November 5<sup>th</sup> national election. Sarah Weidenborner said that the fire hall may be able to be hosted but that they would need a staff member present but that she would look into it. Mr. Brand stated that there was a second conference room at the Town Hall but that it would be a tight fit. A computer would be necessary to stream the meeting via Zoom.

Mrs. LaRue announced that the annual trunk or treat event hosted by the parks and recreation department will take place on October 26<sup>th</sup> from 11AM to 1PM. We like to have a lot of cars in the parking lot handing out candy. If anybody in this group wants to participate who isn't already participating, let her know. Last year was the most participation they've had, they ran out of candy, so the more the merrier.

## **8. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

The next Committee Meeting will be held on Monday, November 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m., Due to the national election on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the Town Hall meeting room will be inaccessible. A meeting location is to be determined. Notice will be provided to the Daily Messenger and posted on the Town's Website

Respectfully submitted,

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Matthew Sousa

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